



CITY OF RIVERSIDE REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY COMMERCIAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

University Corridor/Sycamore Canyon Redevelopment Project Area

The City of Riverside Redevelopment Agency (RDA) is offering the Commercial Improvement Program (CIP) to property owners and/or business owners as an economic incentive to rehabilitate existing commercial structures in need of improvement. A qualified participant may receive an initial grant of up to \$3,000 to cover the costs of architectural design and construction drawings. Participants have the option to select an architect from a list provided by the RDA or select their own licensed architect. An applicant may request a **90% rebate of eligible costs**, not to exceed \$25,000, to cover the cost of improvements. A list of eligible improvements can be found on page 2. After funding approval is received, the applicant selects a contractor and completes the project at his or her own expense, then requests the 90% reimbursement.

What Steps Do I Take?

Before work begins, the RDA staff will work with you to identify the best project within the available budget. Remember: since you are now part of Riverside's revitalization efforts, the RDA Staff is here to help you through this process every step of the way. The following is a description of the process:

1. You submit an application to the RDA staff for consideration.
2. The RDA staff reviews the application and meets with you to confirm eligibility and discuss the project.
3. You and the RDA staff meet with the selected architect on site to discuss the project parameters and your budget.
4. The Architect prepares a *Preliminary Design* and submits it for review.
 - a. The design should provide enough detail for building contractors to bid the work.
 - b. The design should be accompanied by a preliminary construction cost estimate.
5. You and the RDA staff approve the *Preliminary Design*. The architect or a contractor may prepare the construction drawings. Any costs over \$3,000 will be assumed by you and may be reimbursed up to 90%.
6. You are responsible for obtaining all planning approvals. RDA staff can assist you in this process.
7. You will need to secure bids from at least three (3) experienced, licensed contractors.
 - a. You must provide a copy of each bid to the RDA staff (staff will review and provide advice, but is not responsible for selecting a contractor).
 - b. Each bid must reflect payment of **prevailing wages***
8. After the selected contractor's bid is confirmed and costs are known, the RDA staff requests project funding approval.
9. You sign the *CIP Property Maintenance Agreement*.
10. You notify the contractor in writing to commence work in accordance with the submitted bid. (Neither the City nor the RDA are parties to the construction contract.)
11. You or the contractor apply for and receive all relevant permits for construction.
12. The contractor begins construction.
13. You provide weekly updates on construction to the RDA staff. The RDA staff provides support to you and/or the contractor, as needed.

14. Once the contractor completes construction, you pay the contractor in full and obtain lien releases.
15. You provide the RDA staff with a complete record of project costs within 30 days of project completion, including copies of cancelled checks, paid invoices and lien releases. As part of the request for the rebate and a certificate of completion, you **must certify that prevailing wage has been paid** for the construction.
16. After reviewing project documents, the RDA staff:
 - a. Confirms with City's Planning/Building Department that all construction requirements have been met and permits have been finalized.
 - b. Processes payment of rebate within 30 days of the request.
17. The RDA staff records the *Maintenance Agreement* against the property.

**Prevailing wages are specific, minimum hourly rates, predetermined by federal or state government that must be paid to construction workers on public works projects. All publicly funded construction is required by law to use prevailing wage.*

Eligible Improvements And Program Exclusions

Eligible Improvements

CIP funding may be used to cover project costs associated with the following work items:

- Removal, repair or replacement of damaged or deteriorated facade components
- New exterior treatments or wall finishes
- Wood framing or other basic exterior wall materials integral to the facade
- New painting (color is subject to review and approval)
- Signage subject to approval by the Planning Department
- Installation of new doors, windows, awnings and canopies
- Renovation, alteration or enhancement of structural elements visible from the street
- Decorative masonry walls
- Exterior lighting
- Landscaping, including landscaping intended to screen parking areas from view
- Demolition of unoccupied commercial properties and residential buildings in a commercial zoning district
- Improvements to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act
- Seismic retrofitting necessary to the construction of facade improvements

Program Exclusions

CIP funding may not be used to cover costs associated with the following:

- Installation of security bars
- New construction
- Uses inconsistent with the Redevelopment Plan, the City of Riverside General Plan, and all other applicable design guidelines
- Correction of City Code violations unrelated to exterior improvements
- Residential properties, with the exception of residential structures incorporated within a commercial property

For more information on the Commercial Improvement Program (CIP) and to apply please contact:

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